

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed January 26, 2005 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 1 and 4-20 remain pending, the independent claims remaining 1, 13 and 18. None of the claims have been amended. Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 4-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,646,699 to Oh et al. ("Oh").

Claim 1 recites, "enables selective output of the two or more audio channel signals to a plurality of external speakers **and** the one or more speakers . . ."

Item 4 of the previous Office Action cites lines 8-65 of column 4 of Oh. Lines 31-32 refer to "an external speaker." The applicants can find no other disclosure or suggestion in Oh of an external speaker. Oh fails to disclose or suggest "a plurality of external speakers" which limitation appears explicitly in claim 1 of the present invention.

The current Office Action suggests:

a) "a plurality of external speakers" of the present invention corresponds to Oh speakers 12 (see item 1 of the Office Action); and

b) the "one or more speakers" of the present invention also correspond to Oh speakers 12 (see item 3 of the Office Action).

However, since claim 1 recites, "A . . . receiver . . . comprising: . . . one or more speakers . . . and an input . . . coupled to a . . . means . . . to . . . enables selective output of the two or more audio channel signals to a plurality of external speakers **and** the one or more speakers . . .," it is unclear by what reasoning a single Oh component could properly be said to correspond to both features of the present invention.

For at least the above reasons, the cited reference fails to anticipate the invention as recited in claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 13 recites, “A . . . receiver . . . comprising: . . . one or more speakers . . . ; an input for a further audio signal by which said one or more speakers, if receiving said audio signal, operate as a center channel for a plurality of speakers located externally to . . . said receiver . . . ;” it is accordingly unclear by what reasoning a single Oh component could properly be said to correspond to both features of the present invention.

Item 3 of the Office Action dismisses claim 13 as “rejected for the same reason as discussed in claim 1.”

However, the instant applicants submit that, to the contrary, the rejection of claim 13 fails for at least the same reason(s) set forth above with regard to claim 1, as the above quotation from claim 13 demonstrates.

Claim 18 recites, “. . . providing a plurality of speakers external to said receiver and linking said plurality of speakers communicatively to said receiver . . . ”

Item 3 of the Office Action dismisses claim 18 as “rejected for the same reason as discussed in claim 1.”

However, the instant applicants submit that, to the contrary, the rejection of claim 18 fails for at least the same reason(s) set forth above with regard to claim 1, as the above quotation from claim 18 demonstrates.

As to the other rejected claims, each depends from a base claim and is deemed to patentably distinguish over the reference for at least the same reasons, although each warrants further consideration based on its additional, individual merits.

For example, claim 7 recites that the receiver of claim 1 is “coupled with an audio receiver and, via the audio receiver, to the plurality of speakers, wherein the audio receiver has an output for a centre audio channel connected to said input of the television receiver.” Item 4 of the previous Office Action cites FIG. 3, col. 3, lines 33-37 and col. 4, lines 8-44. Although one of these passages mentions a single external speaker, as mentioned above, the applicants have been unable to find anything in this citation that supports a rejection of the limitations specific to claim 7. Item 4 of the previous Office Action, merely concludes that the one external speaker is a center channel, without citing any basis for the conclusion. The recitation in claim 7 of an audio receiver and the limitation regarding connection of center channel to “said input” is ignored by the previous Office Action. Notably, despite all of the above, the previous Office Action deems claim 7 to be anticipated, and the current Office Action maintains the rejection.


The current Office Action suggests that the Oh CD player 34 is the “audio receiver” of the present invention; however, in the context of claim 7 of the present patent application, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have regarded the Oh CD player 34 as the “audio receiver” of claim 7. Accordingly, such an interpretation by the Office Action is not fairly regarded as being reasonable. In addition, the Office Action cannot show “coupled . . . via the audio receiver, to the plurality of speakers . . .” As far as the “centre audio channel” of claim 7 is concerned, the current Office Action simply proclaims it to be Oh audio signal A2, without any explanation.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the present claims are patentable in view of the cited references. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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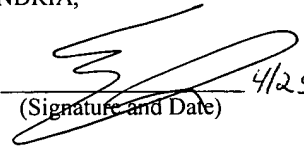
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